Refining Your Image:

Eliminate Distractions; Enhance Positives
Session 3

© J. Alan Whiteside

Goals

1. Become more aware of distractions
2. Learn to draw the viewer's eye to your main character

“

Visualize the finished image in your mind’s eye as you are taking the picture…You do this so that when you get to the image editing process, you already have the end in mind.”

- Vincent Versace

“Tousled Hair,”
Vincent Versace

“Receding,” Guy Tal

In order to be considered as art, I believe that photographs must be more than representations of things I’ve seen. They must also be creative and expressive. I believe further that in order to enrich life most, photographs must not be just expressive but self-expressive.” - Guy Tal

Second Half of the Equation: Accentuating the Positive

It’s about what you see…

and what you ***do*** with what you see.

Consider Using These Tools

- Cropping
- This Session → Dodge and Burn
- Saturation Adjustment
- Blurring
- Foreground to Background Transition
- Transposition (flipping the image)
- Vignette and Spotlight

Dodging and Burning to Enhance the Image

- Dodge = lighten; Burn = darken
- Low- and medium-contrast images can appear flat
- Can be used to create the appearance of 3 dimensions with shadows and shading
- Accentuate natural light falloff on shapes; increase realism
- Direct the viewer's eye and minimize less important areas
- Contouring occurs as bright areas advance and darker areas recede

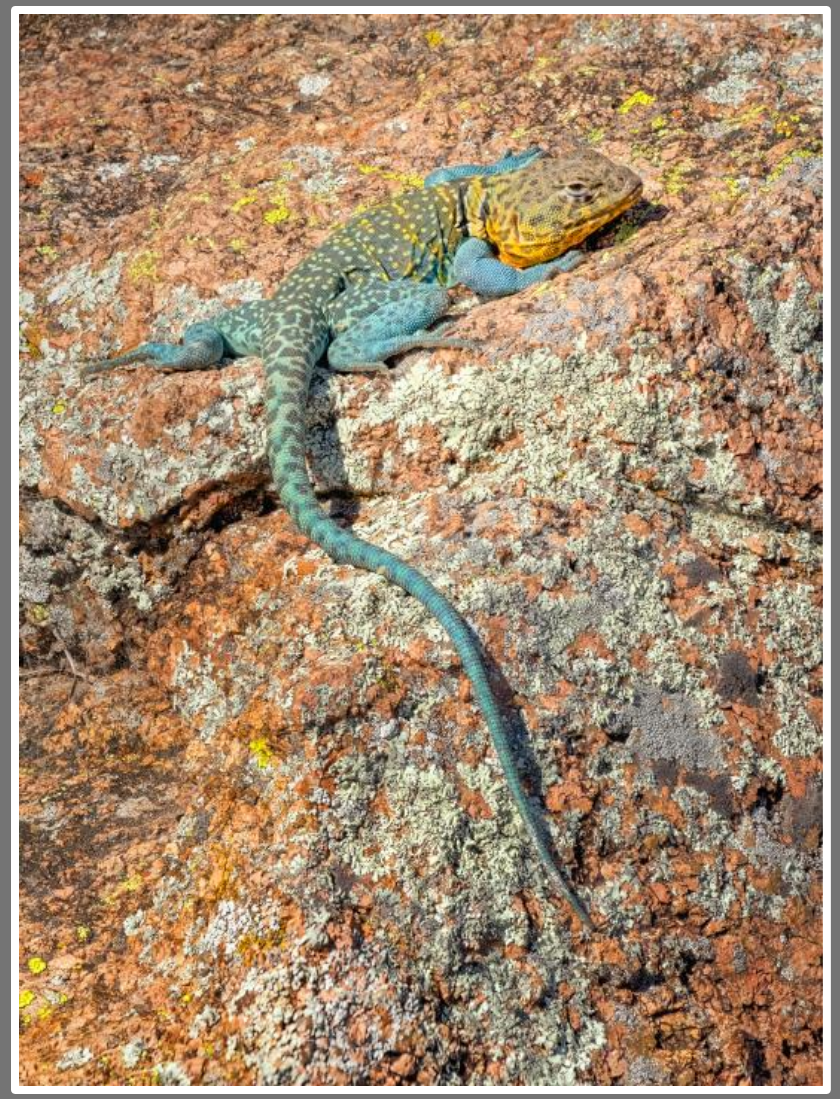
Dodging and Burning Example

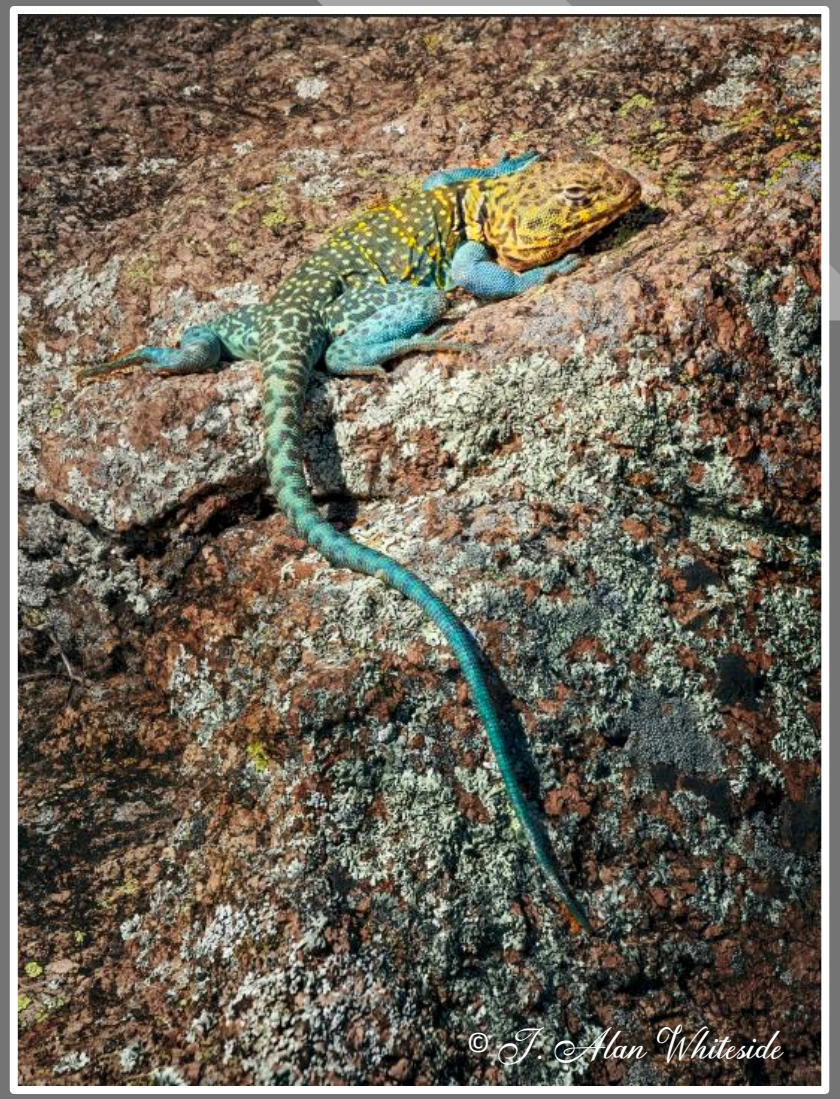
RAW File

Final Image

Dodging and Burning Example

RAW File





Final Image

Dodging and Burning Example

Partially
Processed File

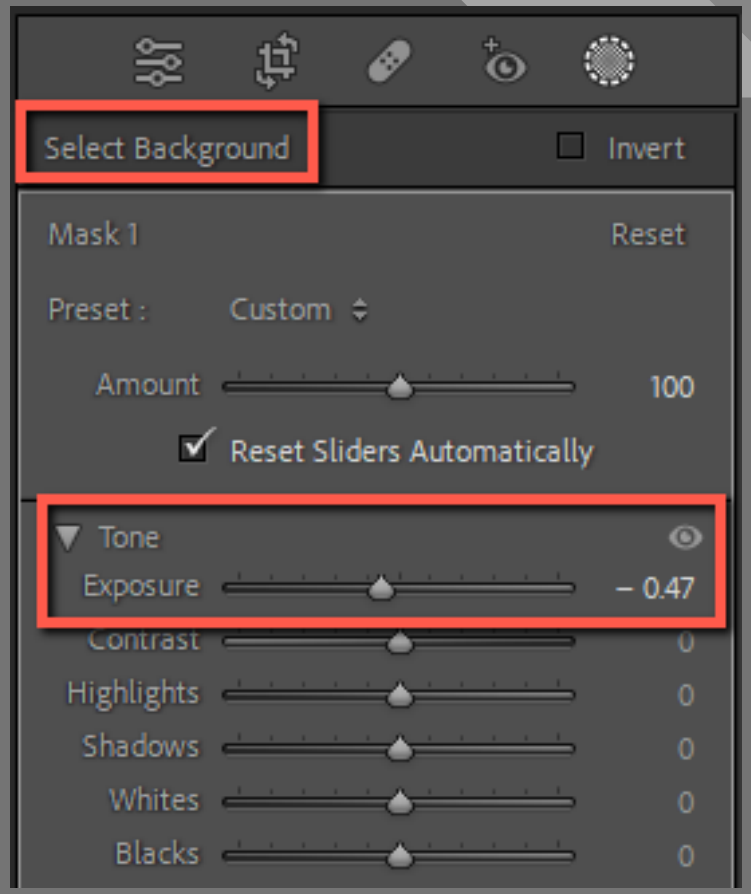
Final Image

Some Typical Dodging and Burning Methods

- LR: Masked selection with Exposure change
- LR: Post-Crop Vignetting
- PS: Soft Light layer filled with 50% Gray
- PS: Blank layer, top of stack; Overlay or Soft Light blend mode
- PS + Nik Viveza: Brightness (+ color temp—optional)
- PS: Dodge and Burn tools

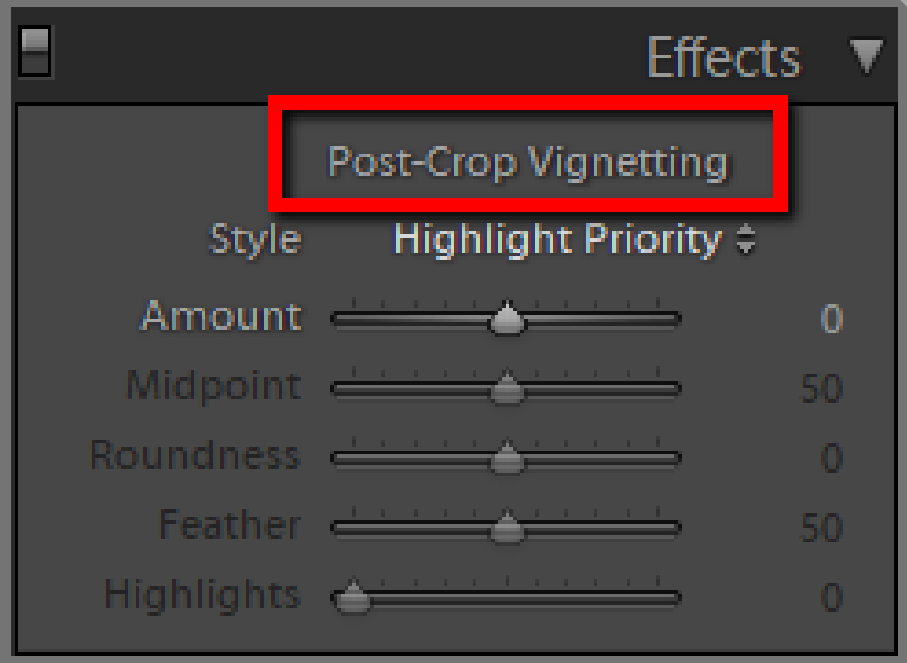
Dodging and Burning Methods

- LR: Masked selection with Exposure change



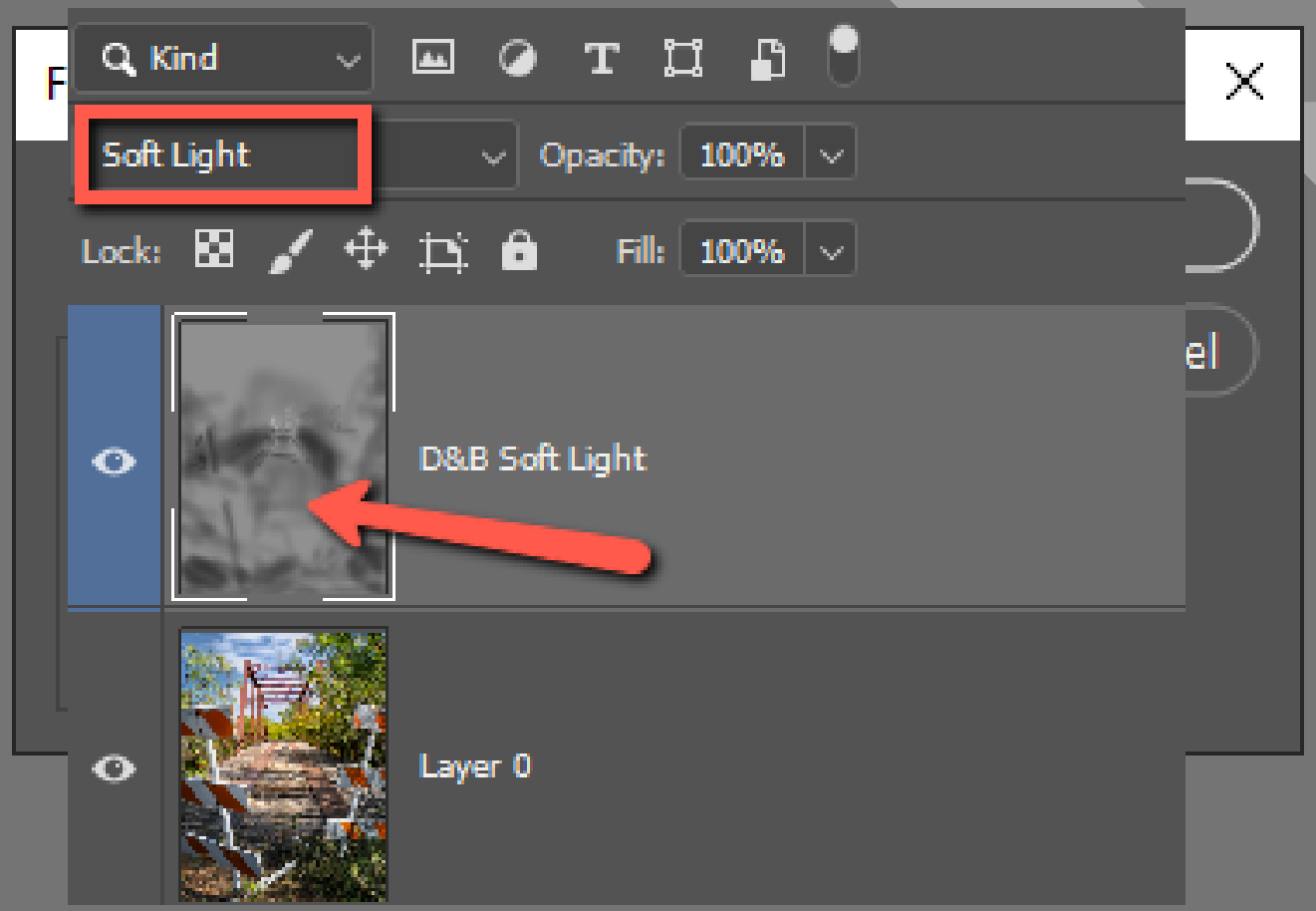
Dodging and Burning Methods

- LR: Post-Crop Vignetting

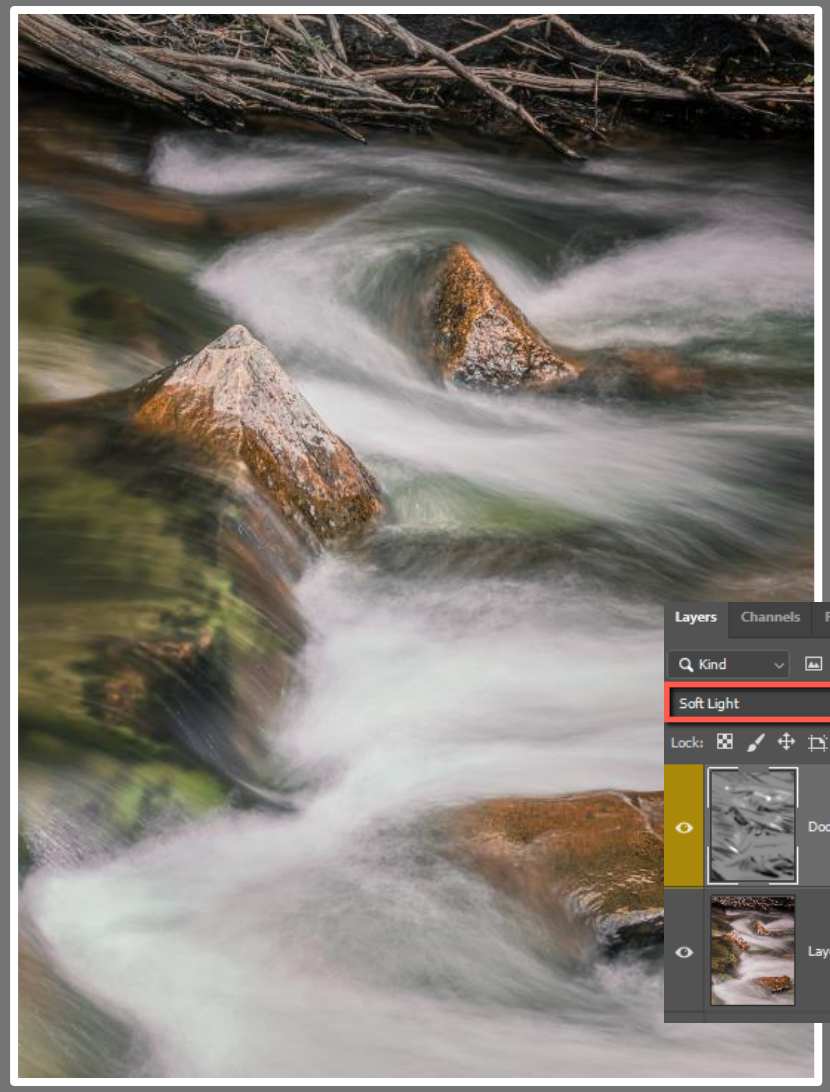


Dodging and Burning Methods

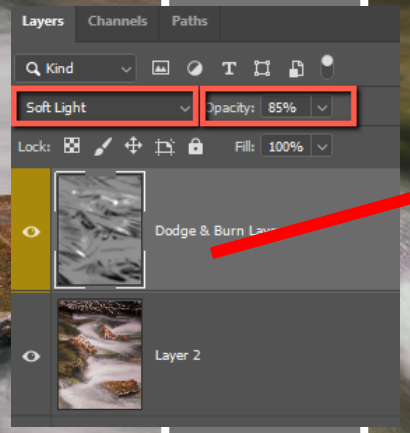
- PS: Soft Light layer filled with 50% Gray (Use Dodge/Burn Tool)

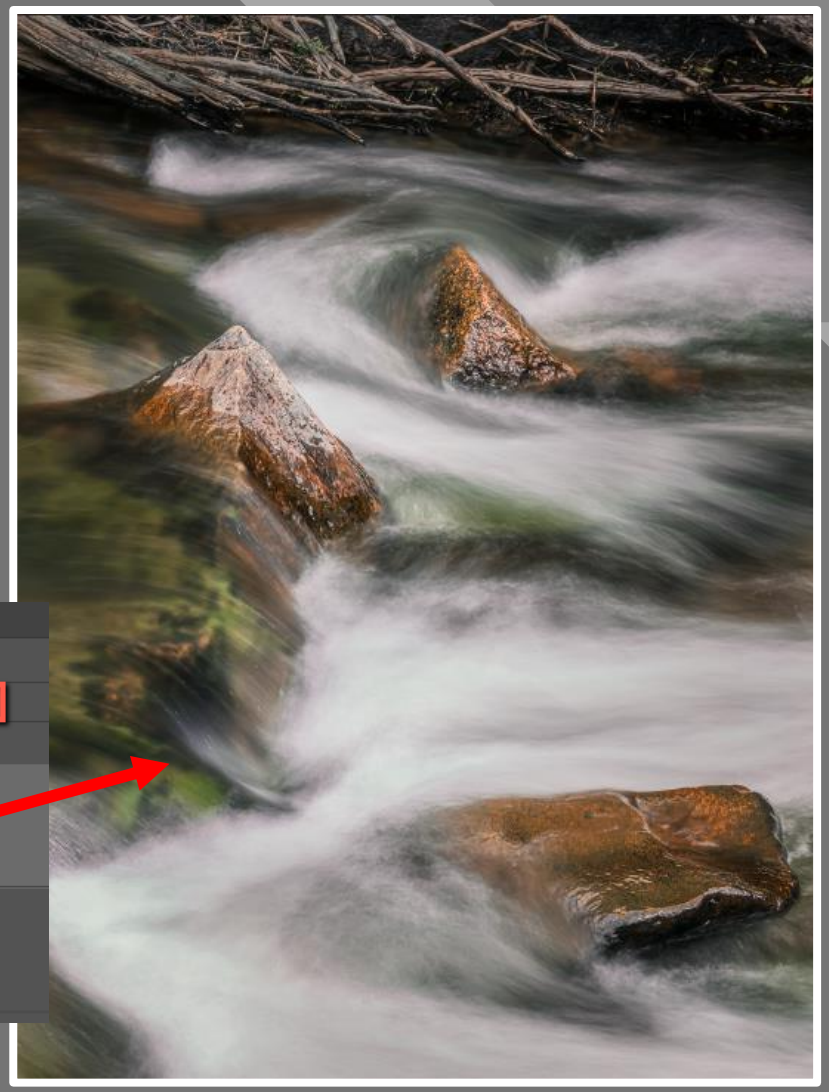


Dodging and Burning Example



Before D&B

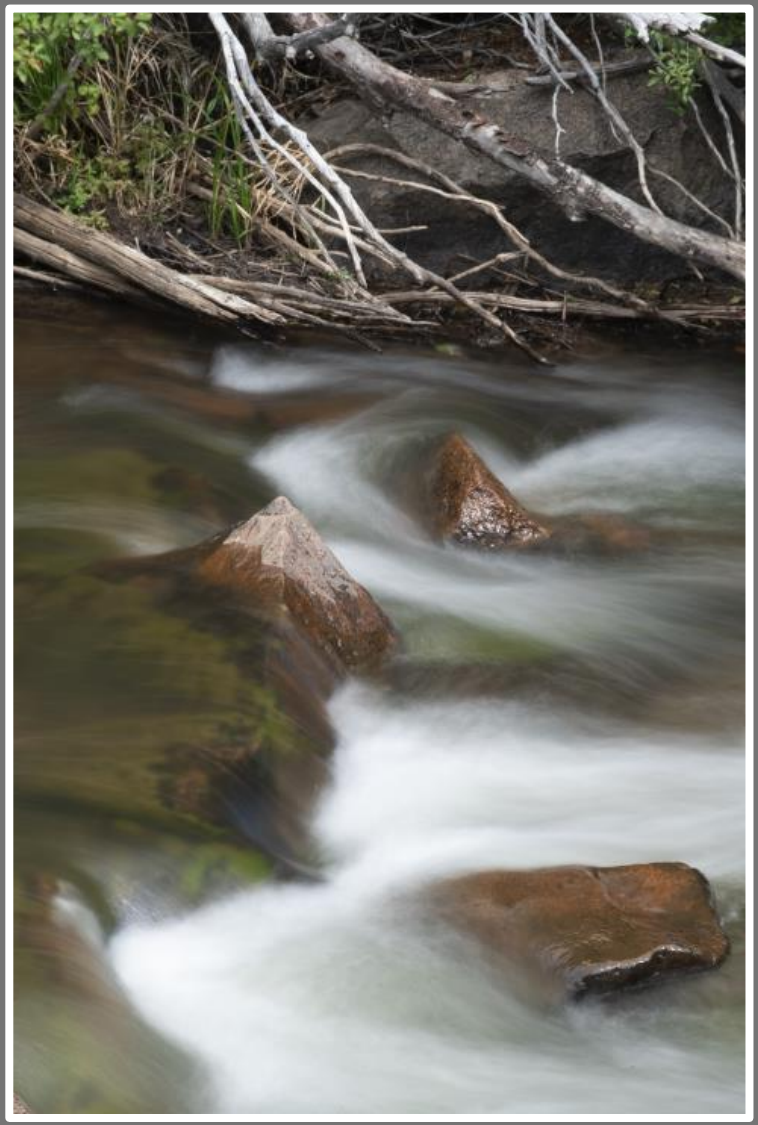




After D&B

Dodging and Burning Example

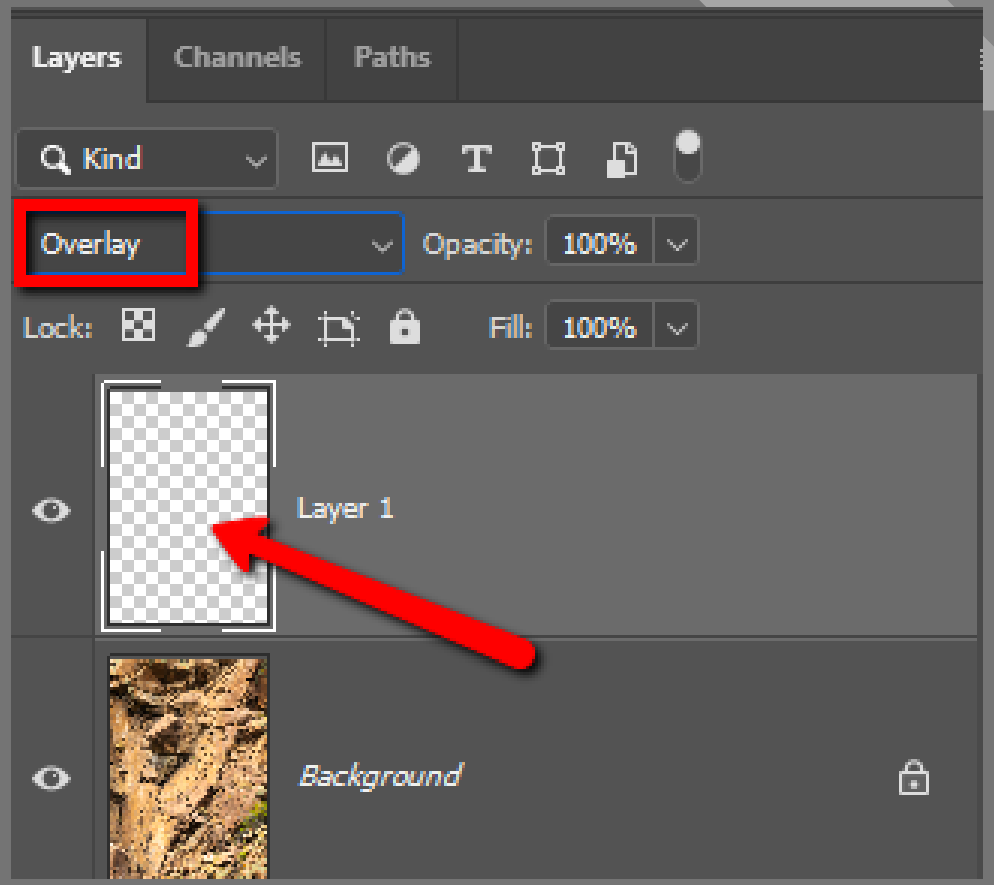
RAW File



Final File

Dodging and Burning Methods

- PS: Blank layer, top of stack; Overlay or Soft Light blend mode (Use Brush Tool with black or white paint)



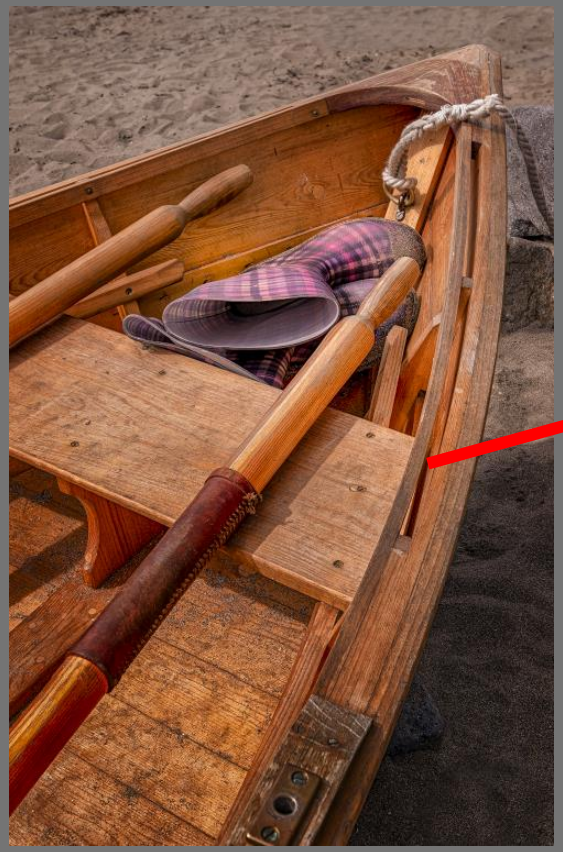
Dodging and Burning Methods

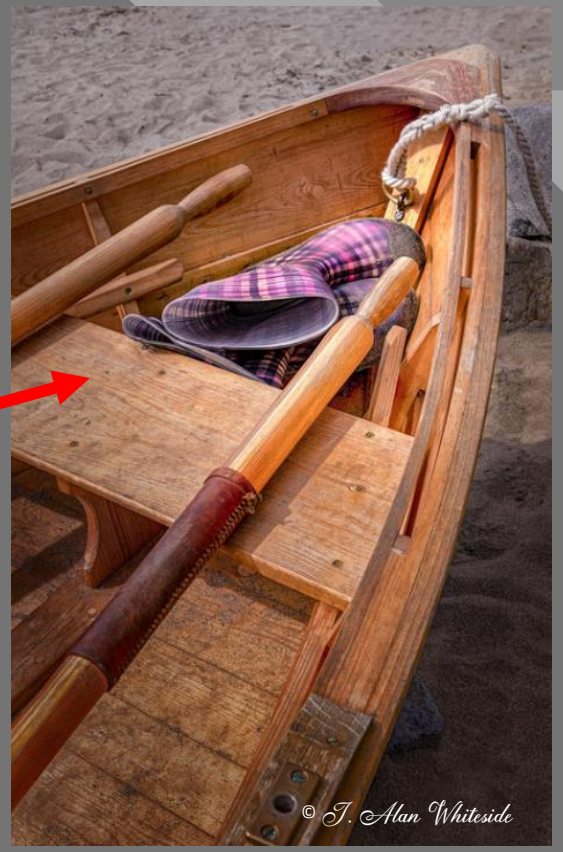
- PS + Nik Viveza: Brightness/Contrast (+ color temp—optional)

Mask shows area to be affected

Dodging and Burning Methods

- PS + Nik Viveza: Brightness (+ color temp—optional)





Dodging and Burning Example

Before D & B

Dodging and Burning Examples

50% Soft Light

Blank Overlay Layer

Viveza

Horizontal Curve

PS D & B Tools

All images © J. Alan Whiteside

Caddo Lake Trees

Distractions:

- Deep shadows
- Muddy tones

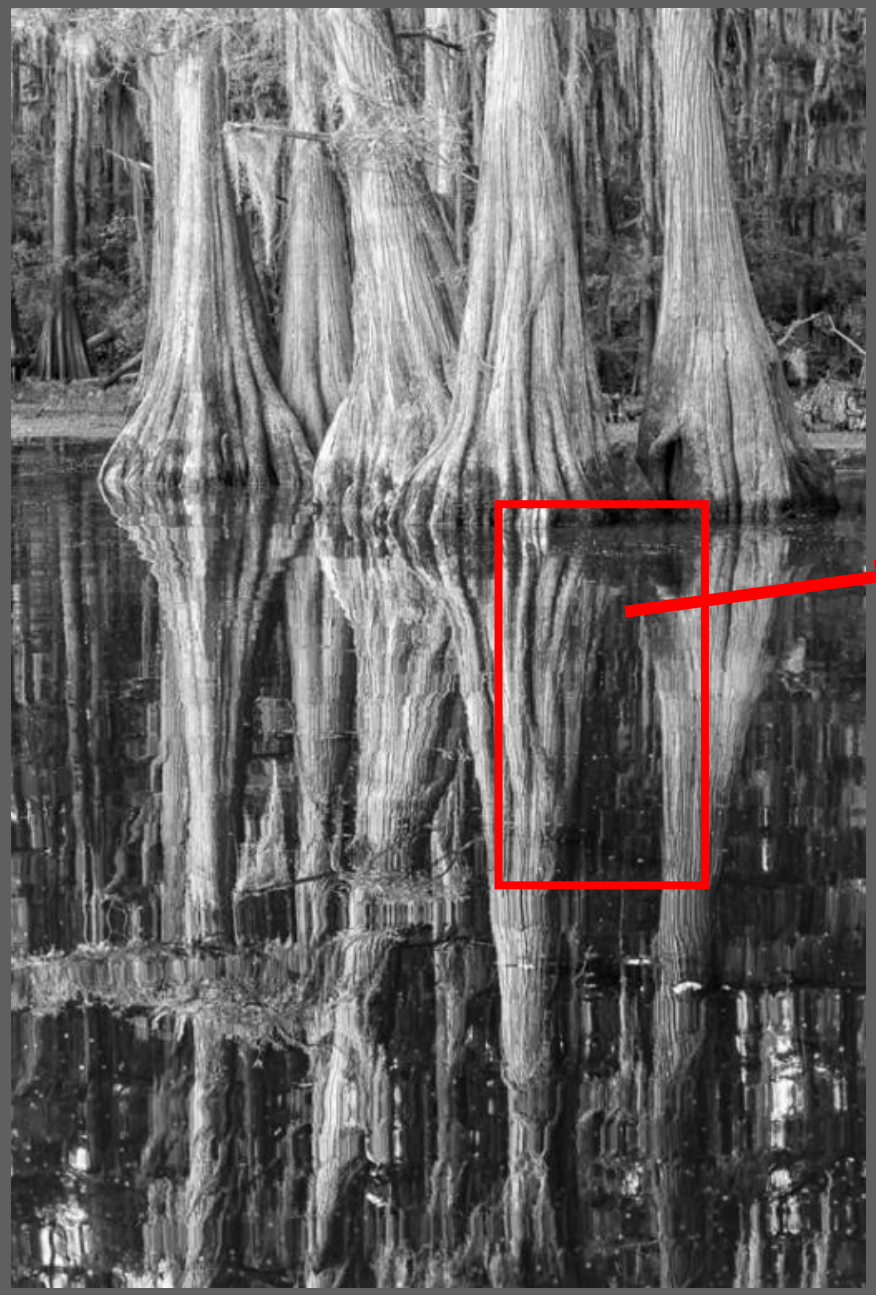
Unadjusted RAW file

Caddo Lake Trees

Tone and Color Adjusted:

- Shadows opened
- Reflection becomes a distraction

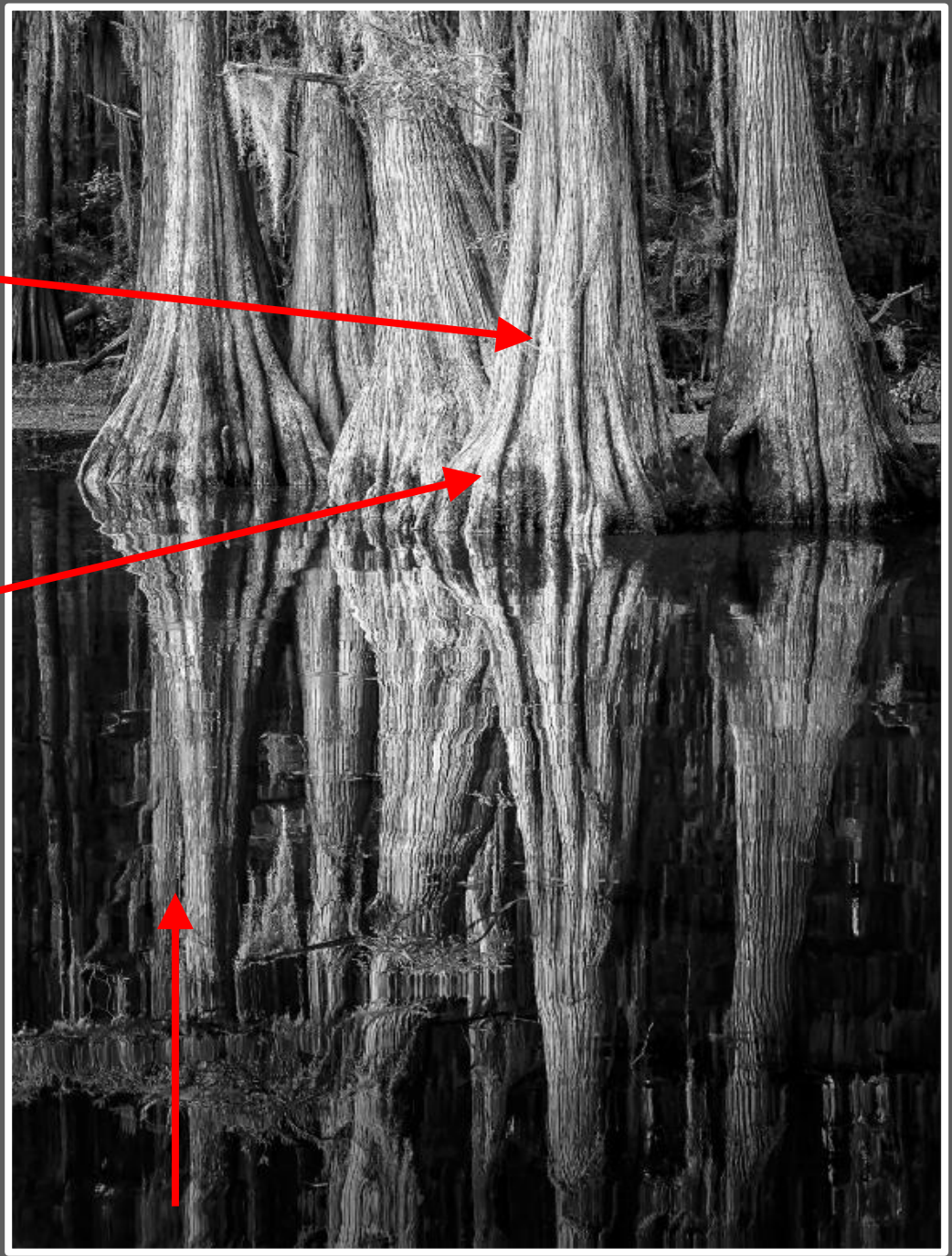
Tone and Color Adjusted

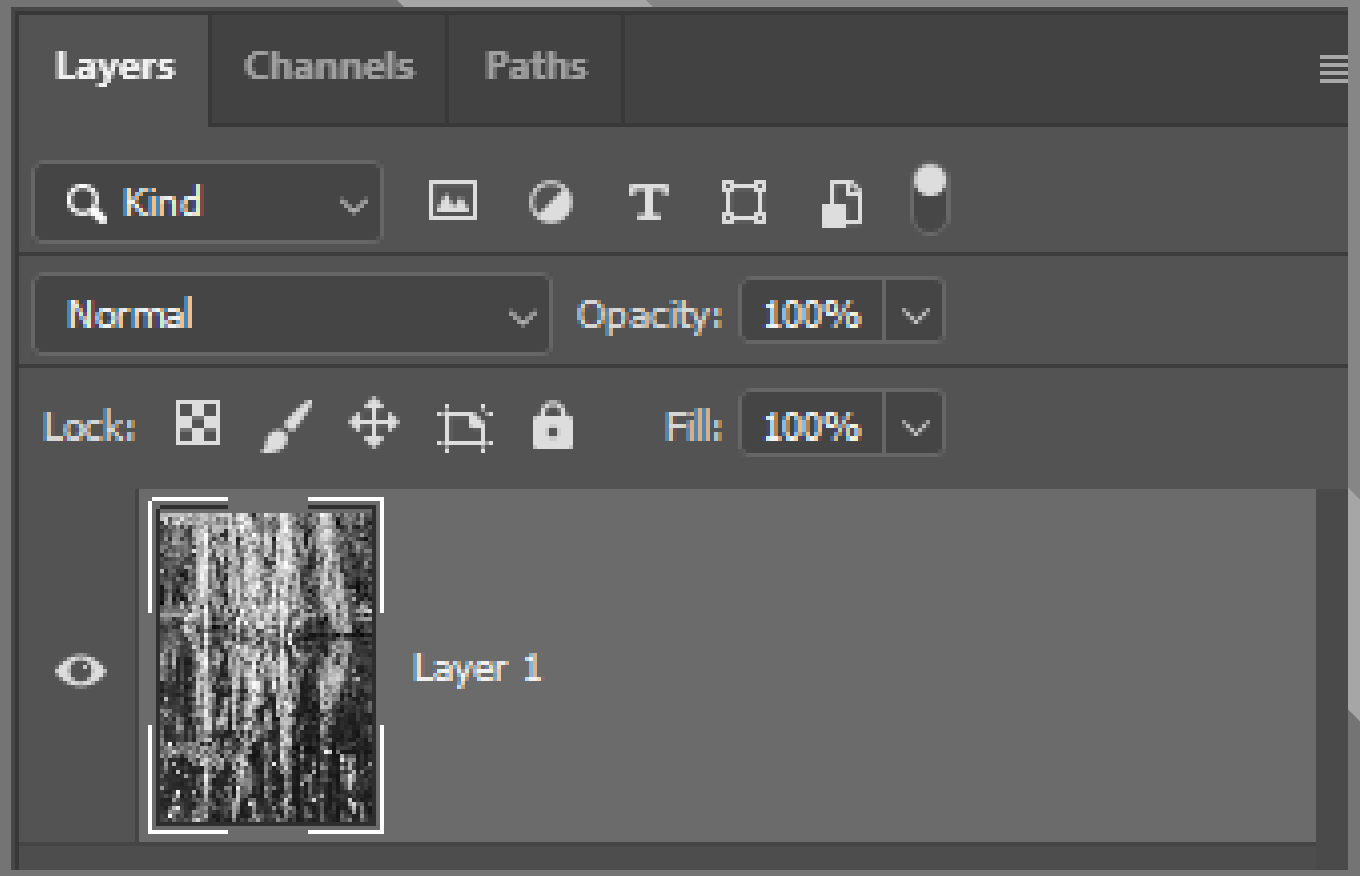


Distracting spots

Conversion to Mono

- Added contrast and brightness to light areas of prominent trees
- Added contrast and *lowered* brightness of dark areas of prominent trees
- Added gradient to darken bottom




Layers
Channels
Paths
Kind
Normal
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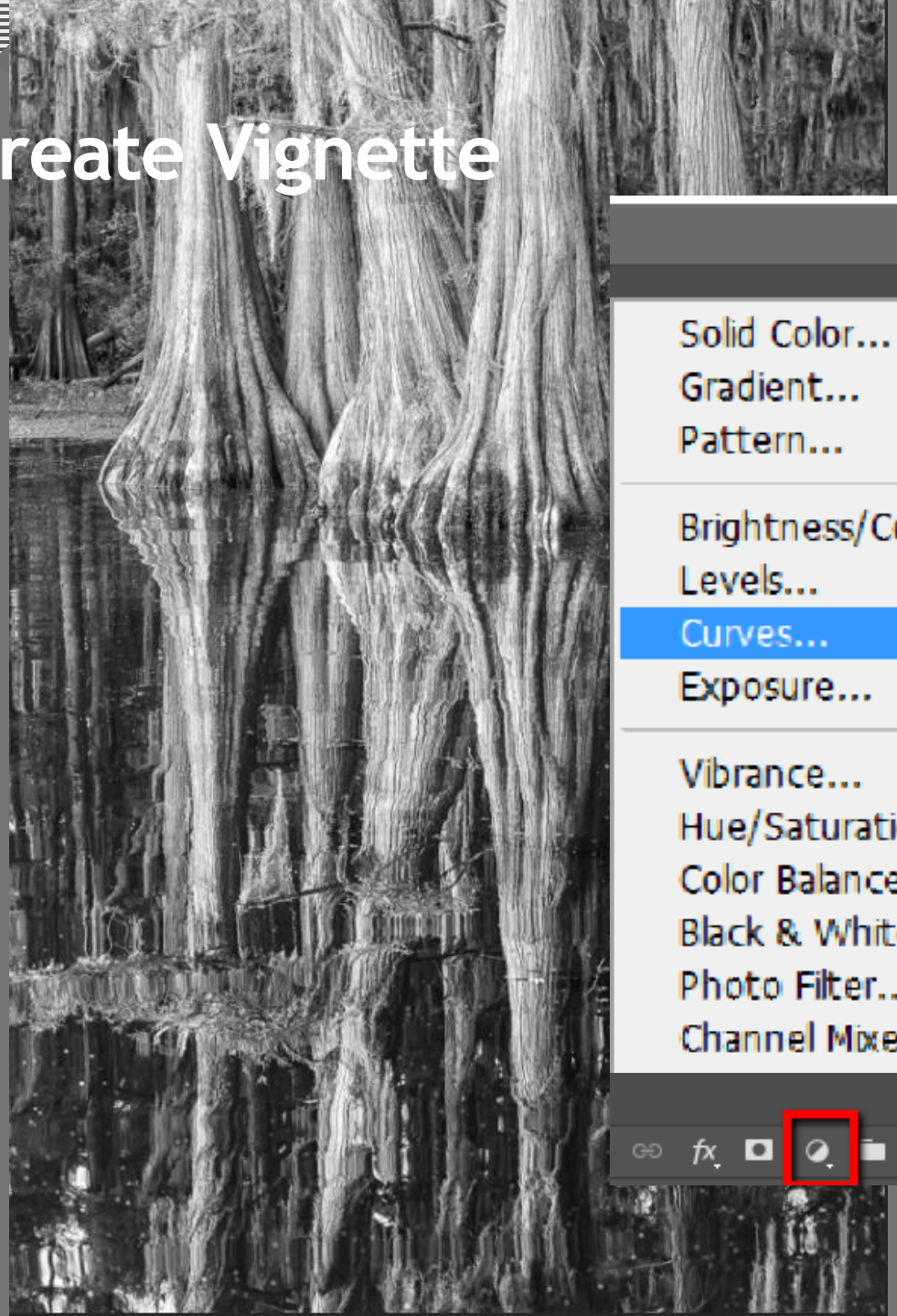
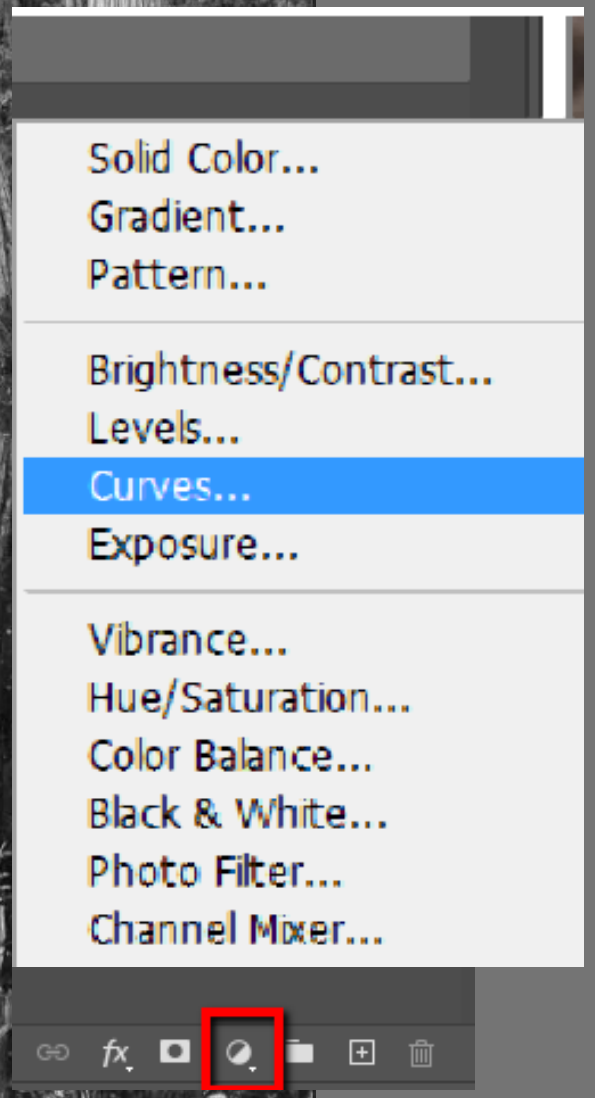
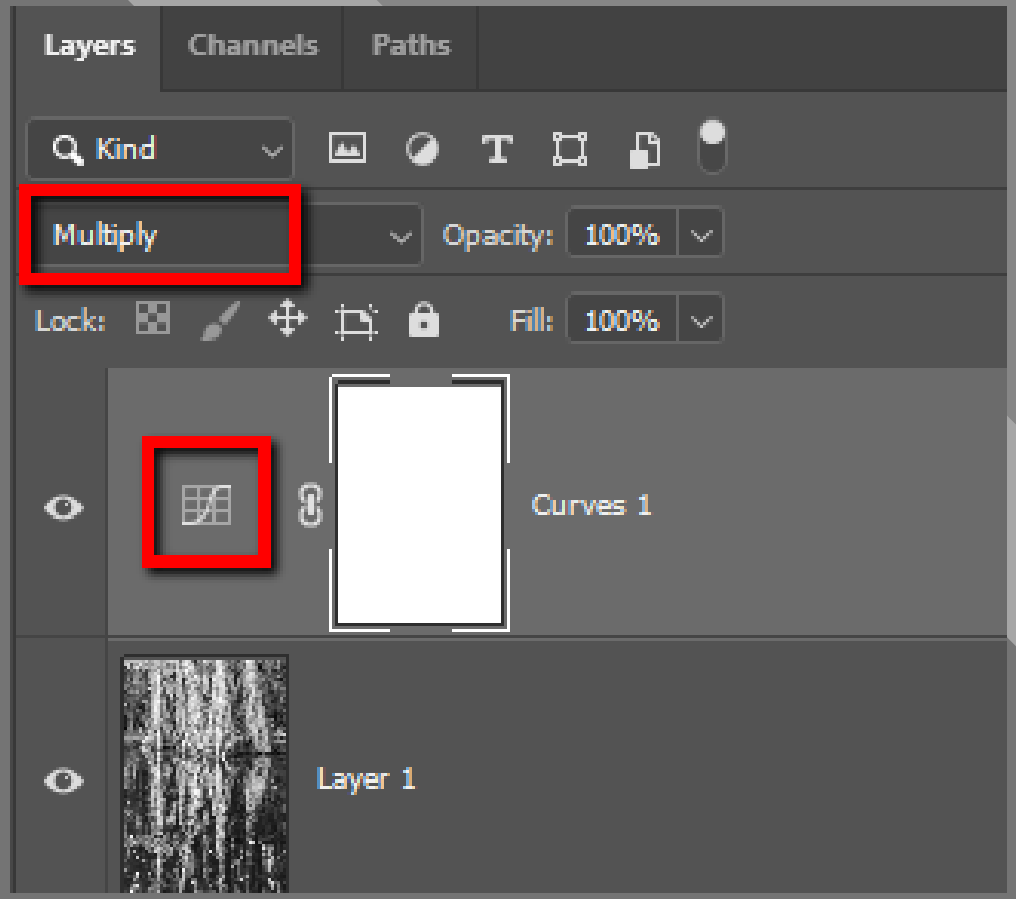
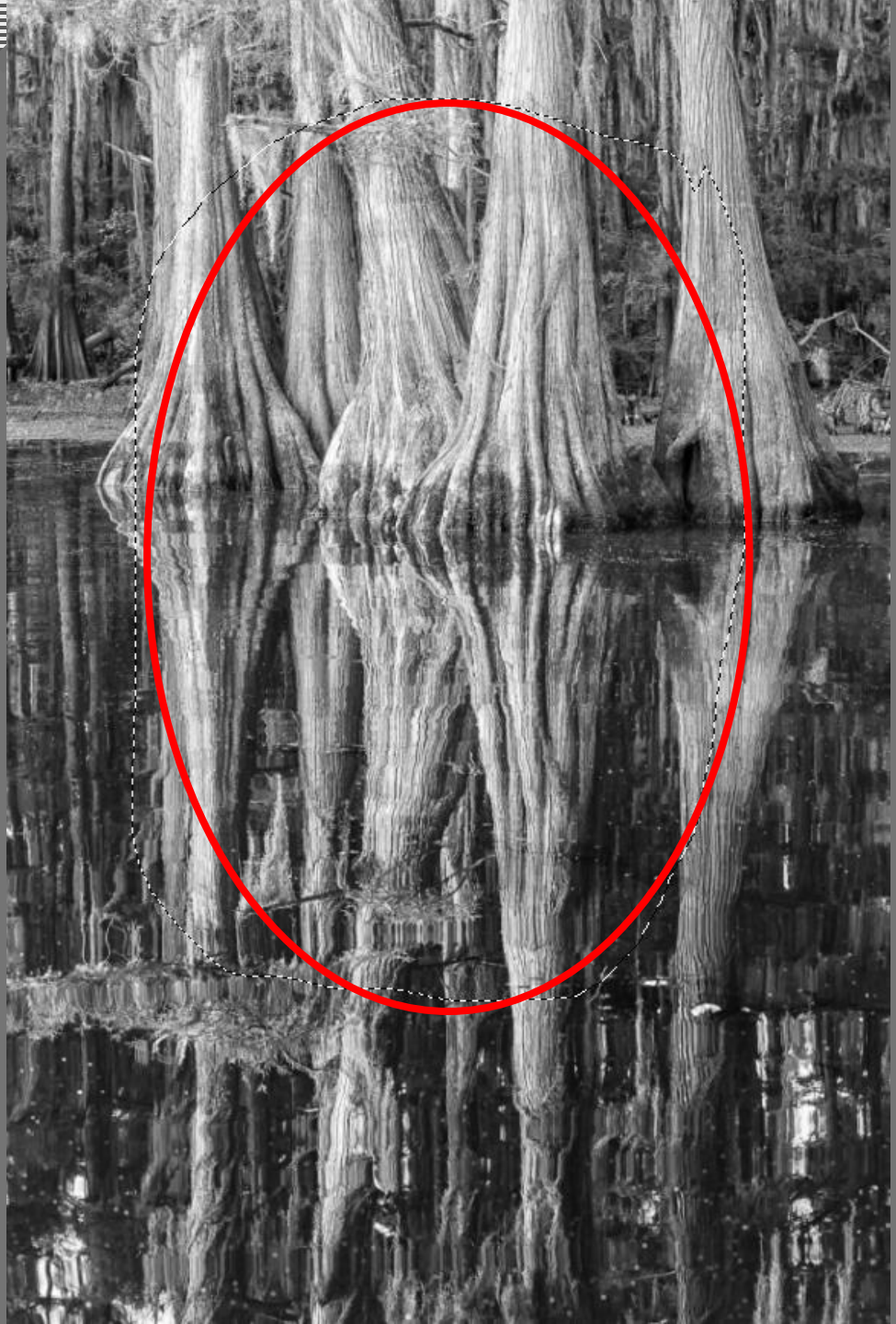
Lock:
Fill: 100%
Layer 1

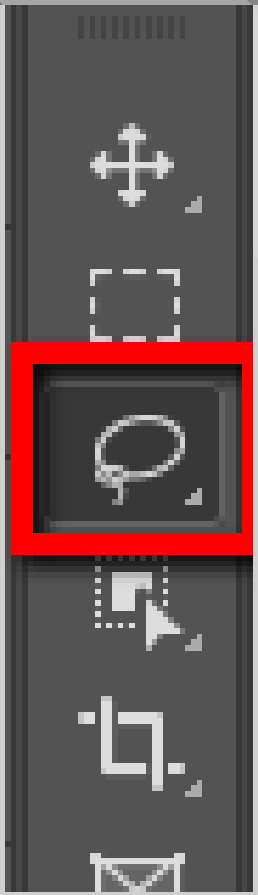
Create Vignette

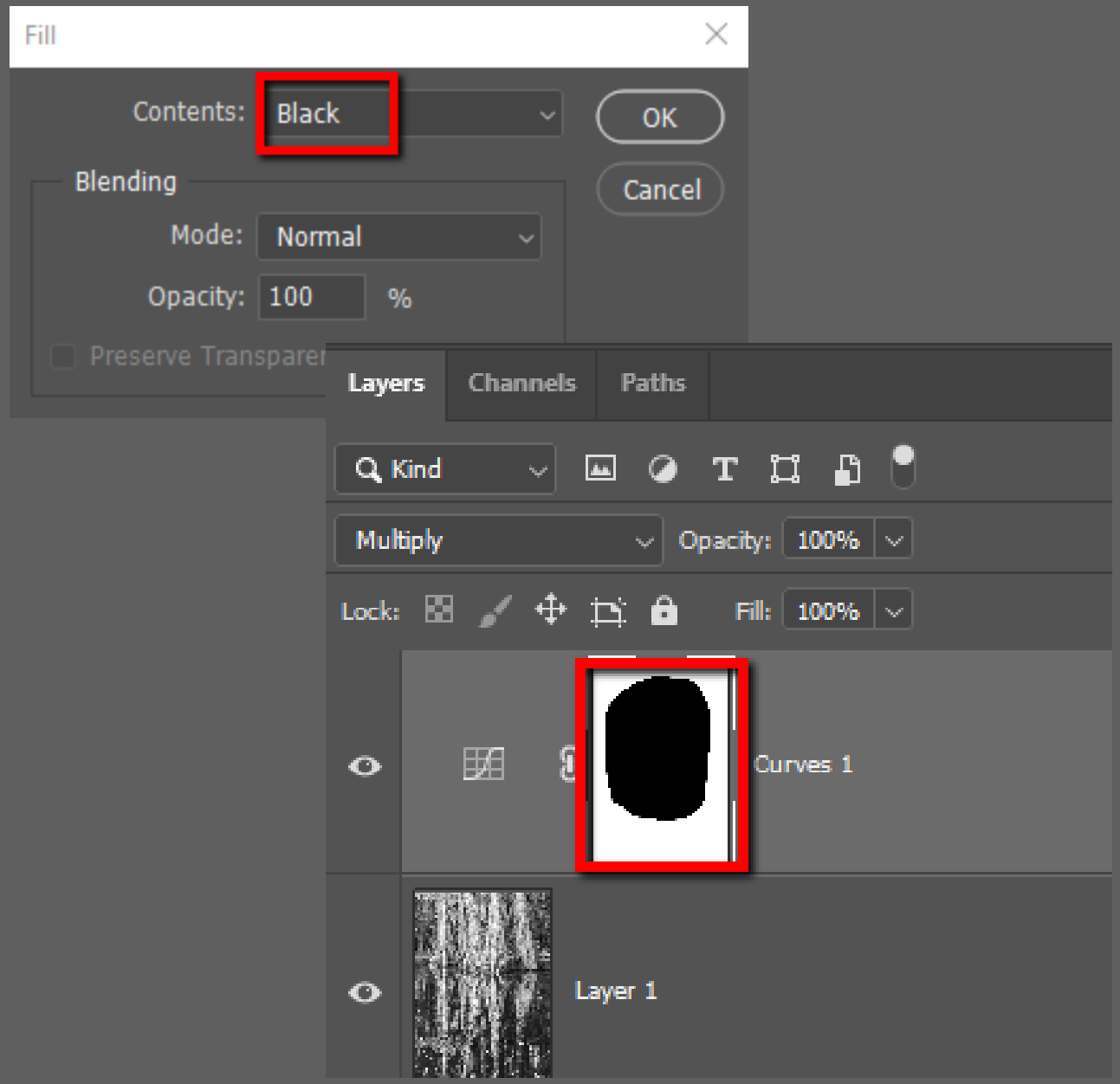


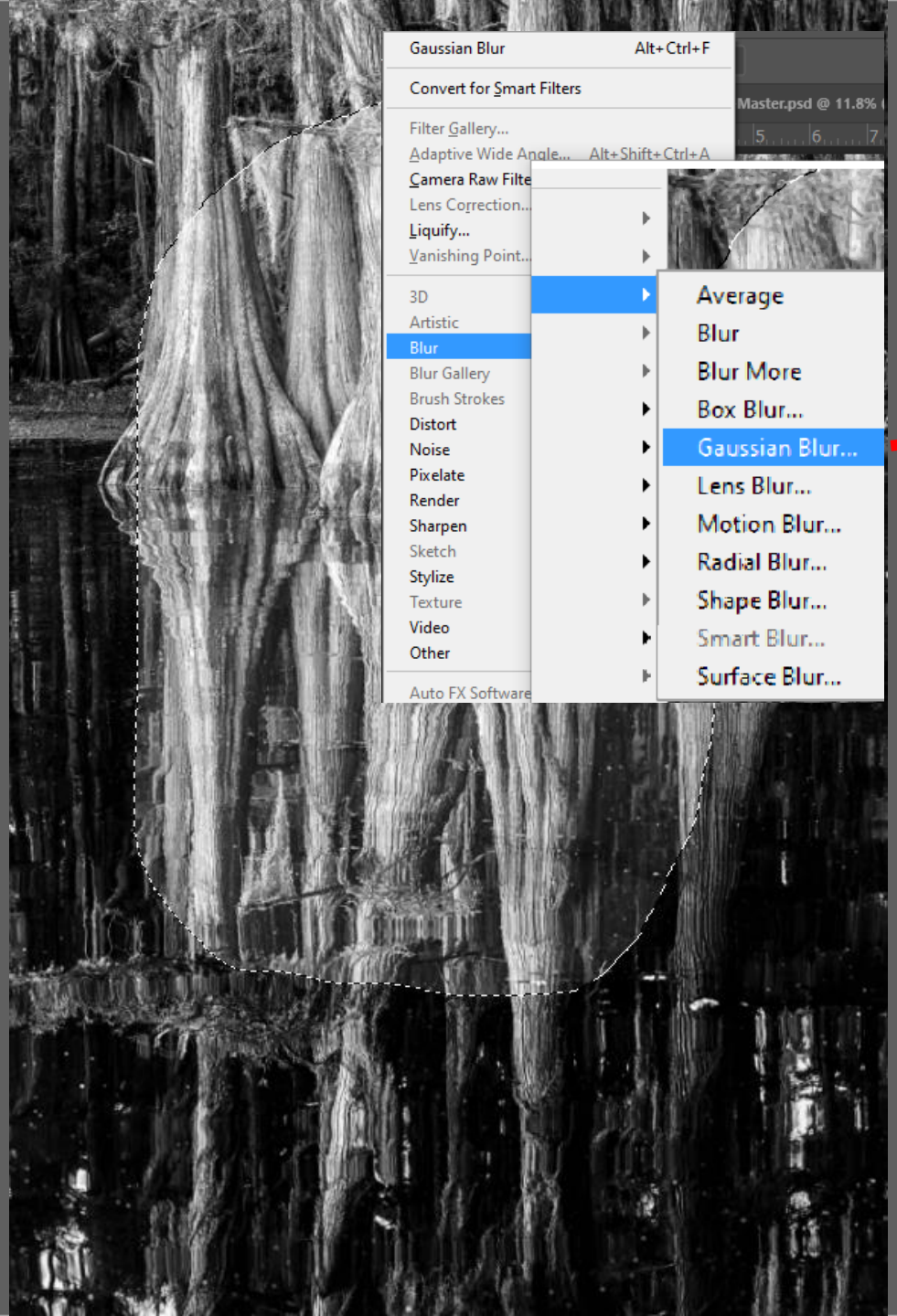


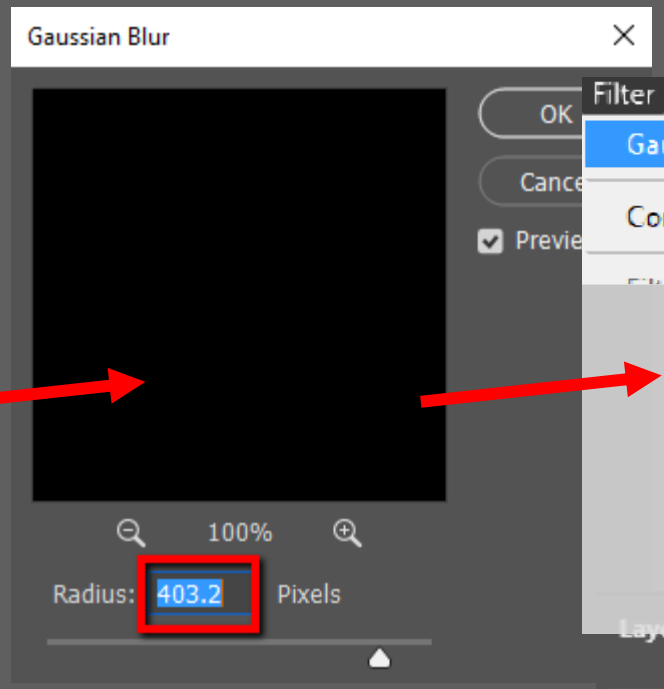




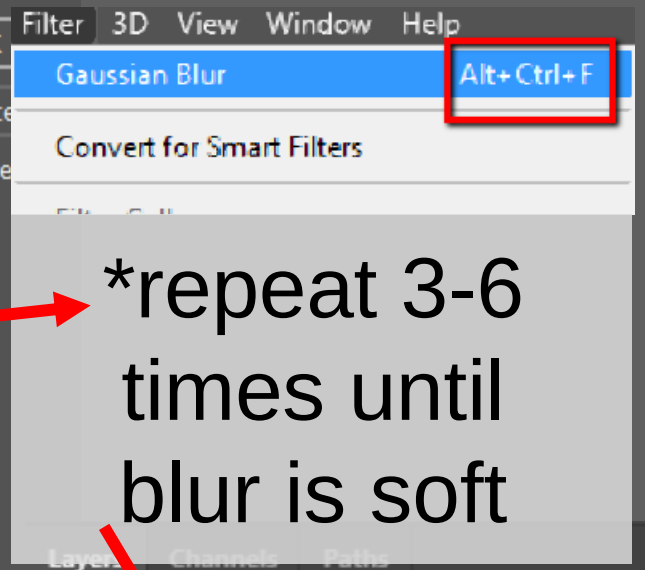



Fill
Contents: Black
OK
Cancel
Blending
Mode: Normal
Opacity: 100 %
Preserve Transparer
Layers
Channels
Paths
Kind
Multiply
Opacity: 100%
Lock:
Fill: 100%
Curves 1
Layer 1

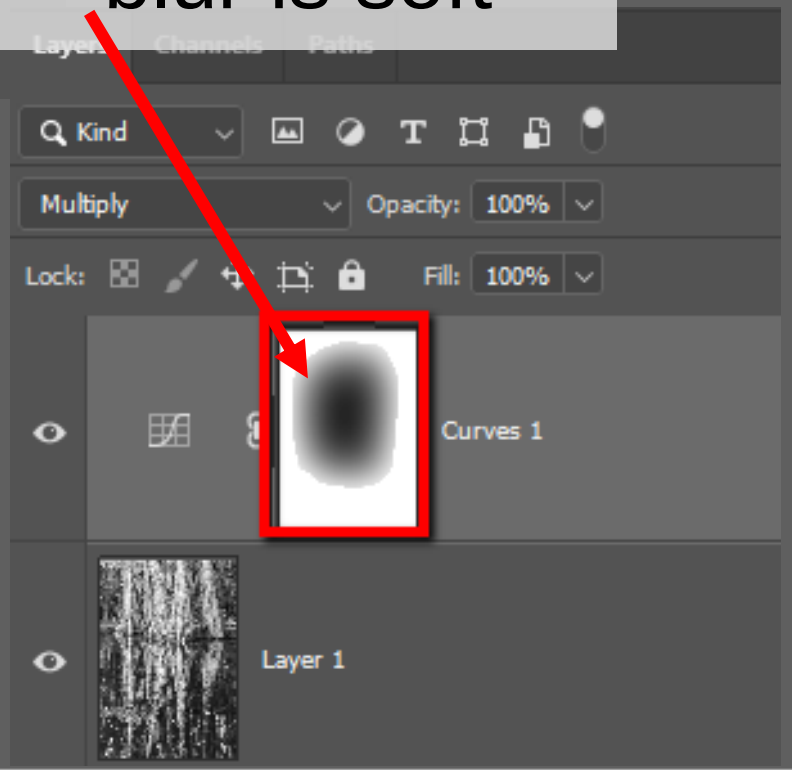


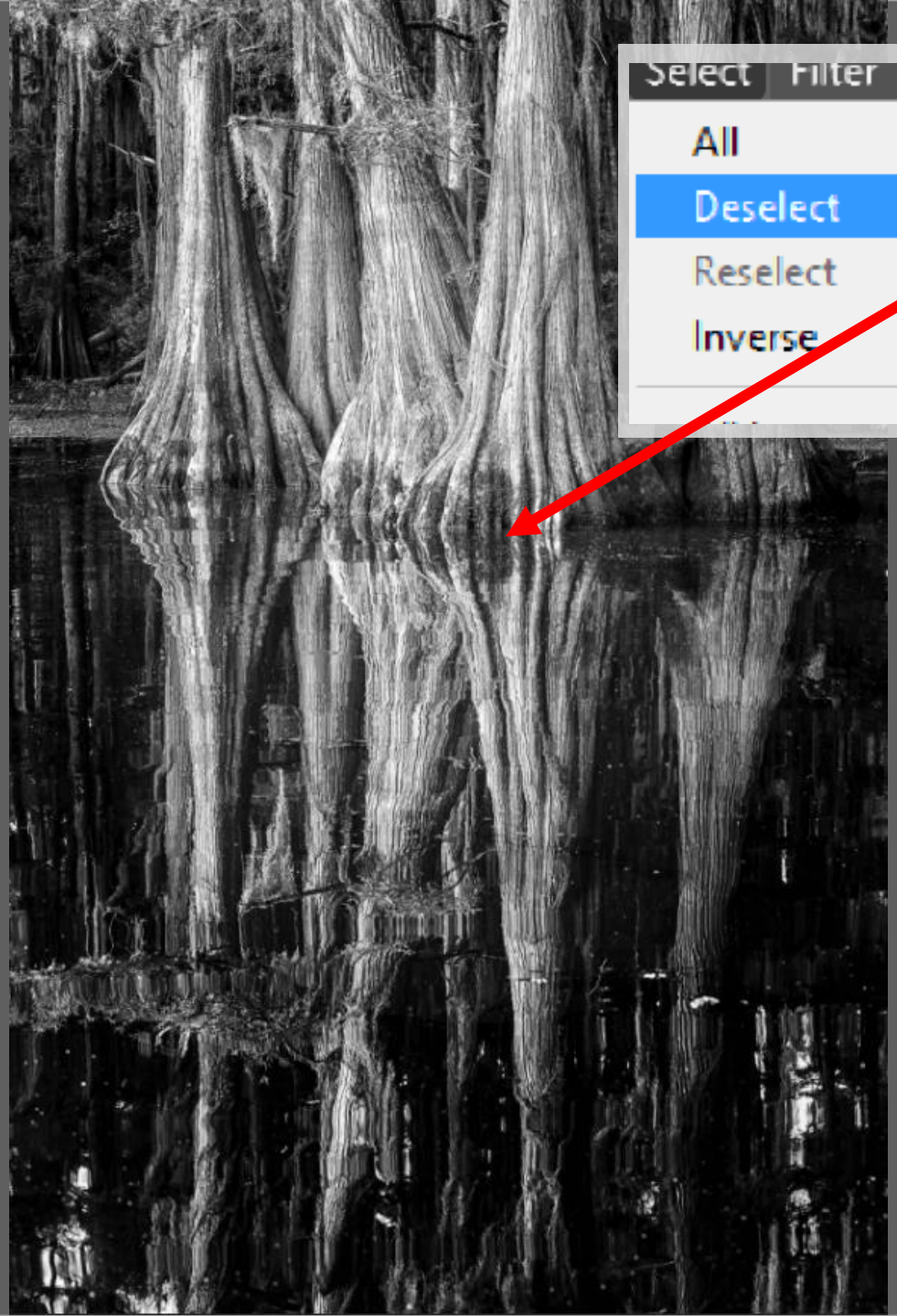


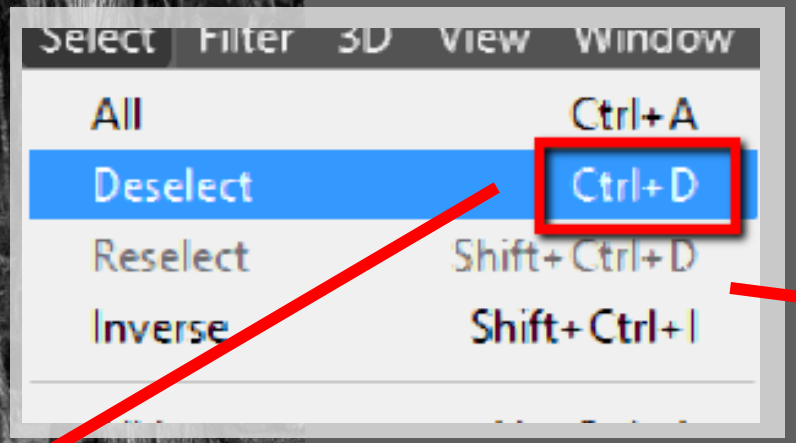
Radius depends on size of image and doesn't require precision

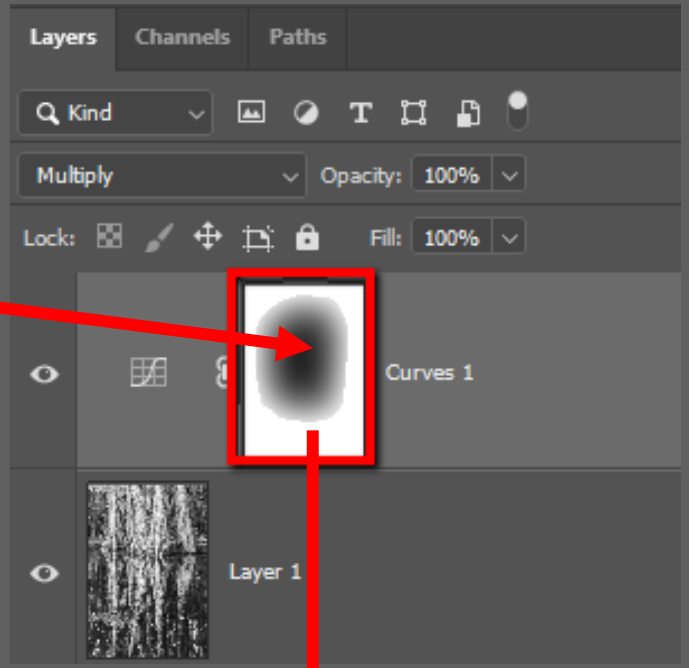


*repeat 3-6 times until blur is soft






Select
Filter
3D
View
Window
All
Ctrl+A
Deselect
Ctrl+D
Reselect
Shift+Ctrl+D
Inverse
Shift+Ctrl+I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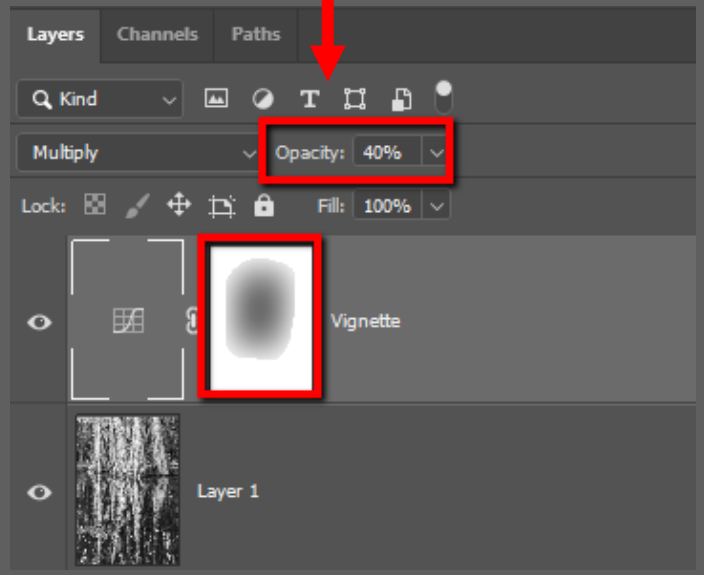
Curves 1
Layer 1


Layers
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Paths
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Opacity: 40%
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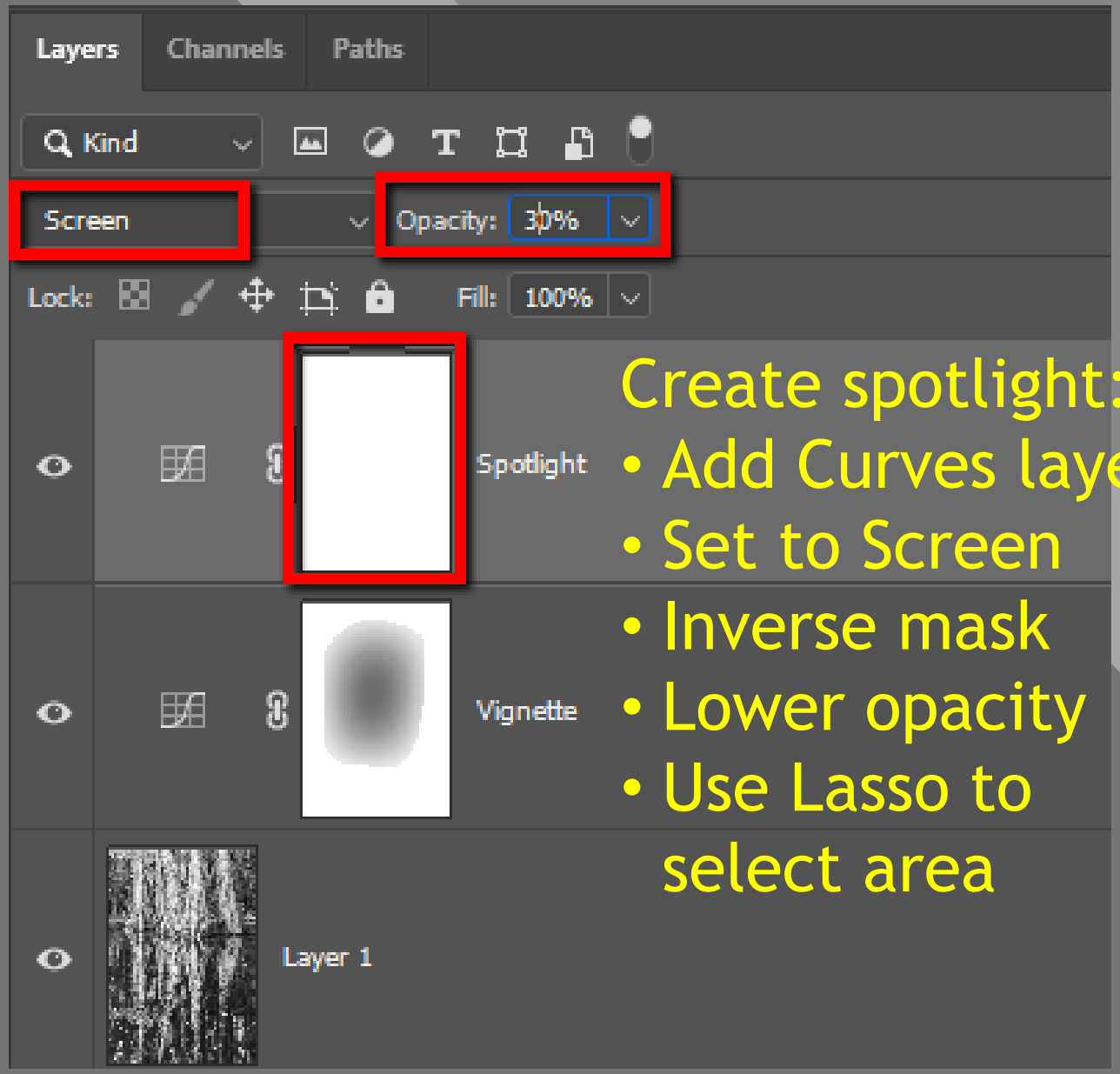
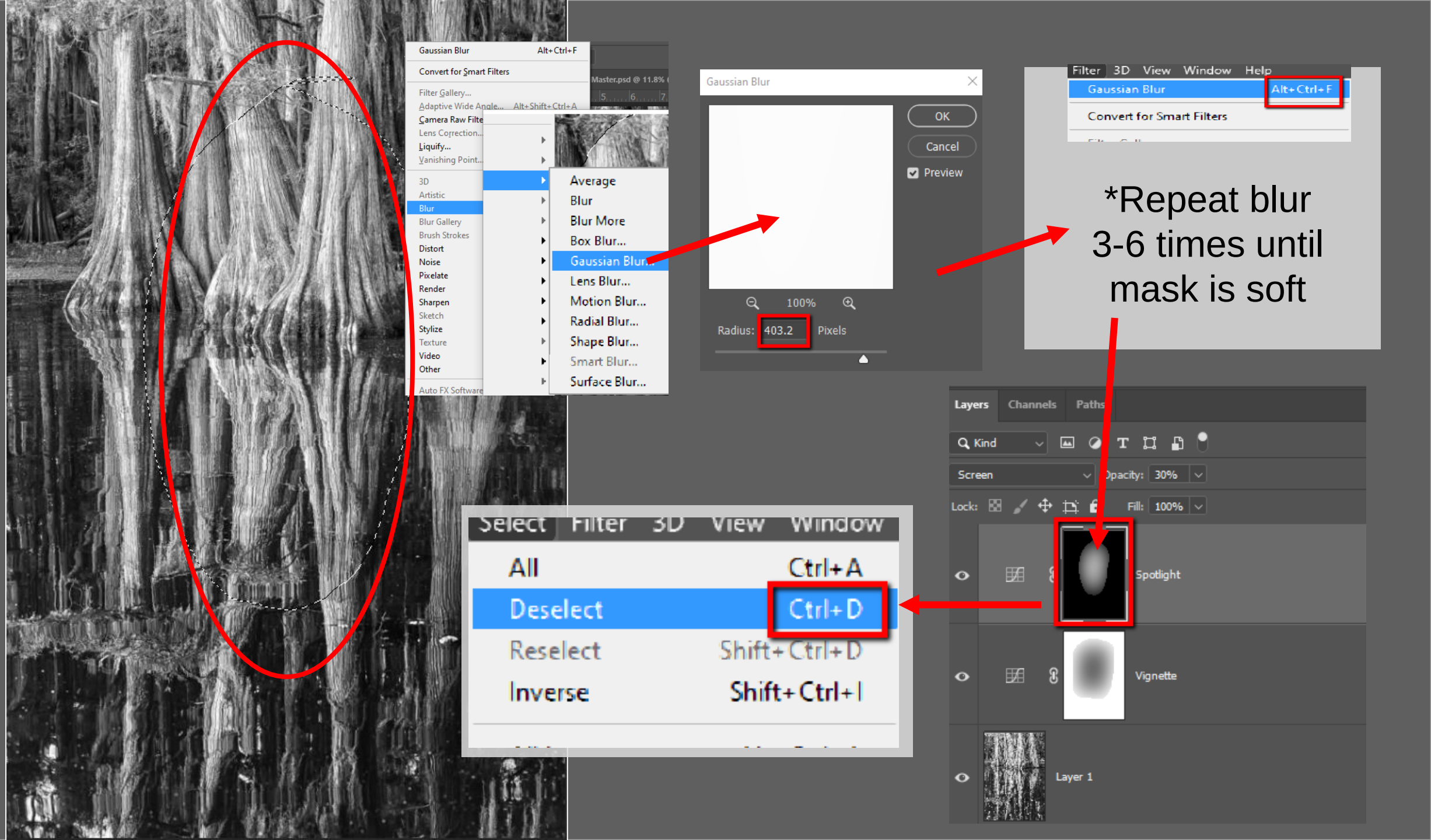
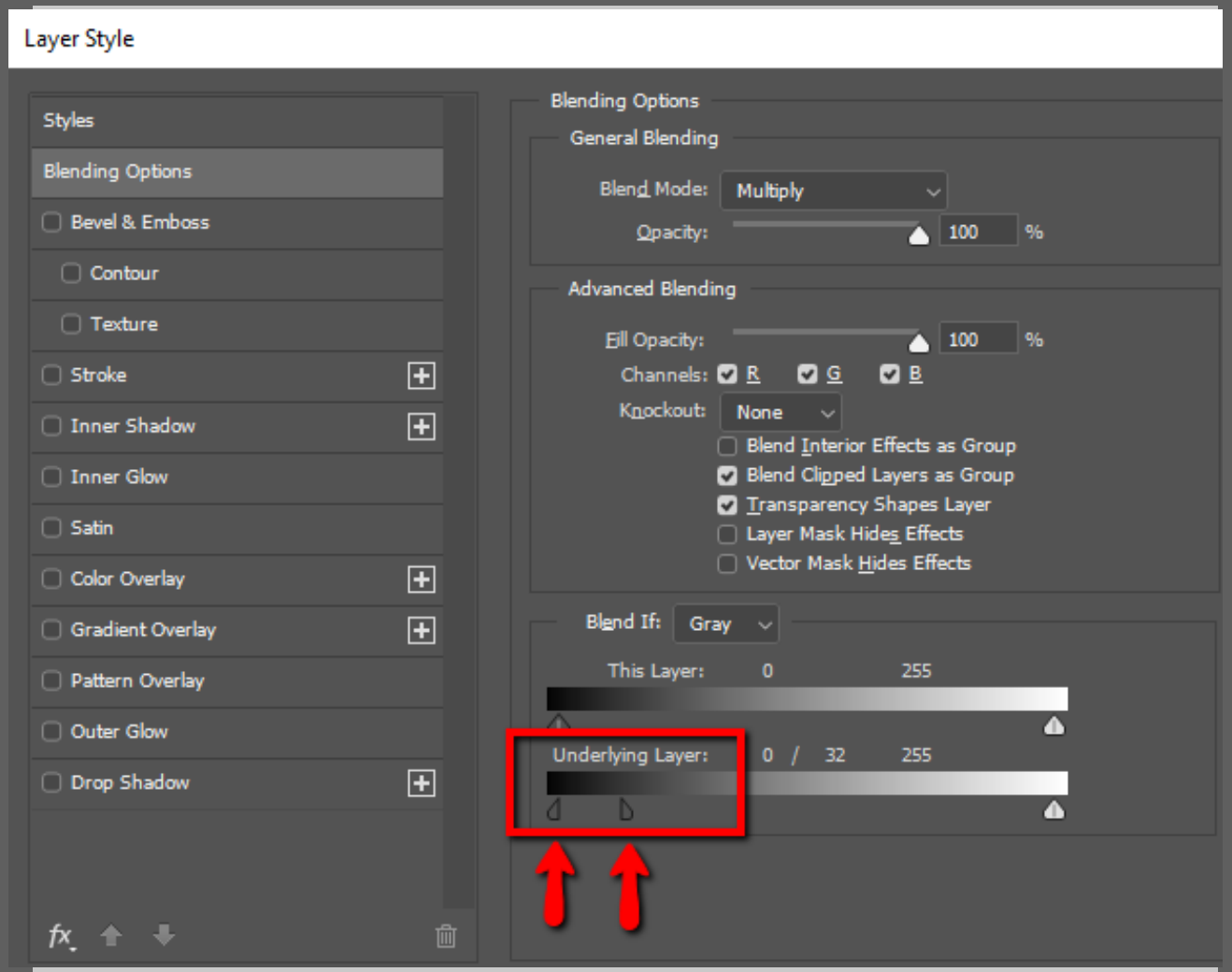
Vignette
Layer 1



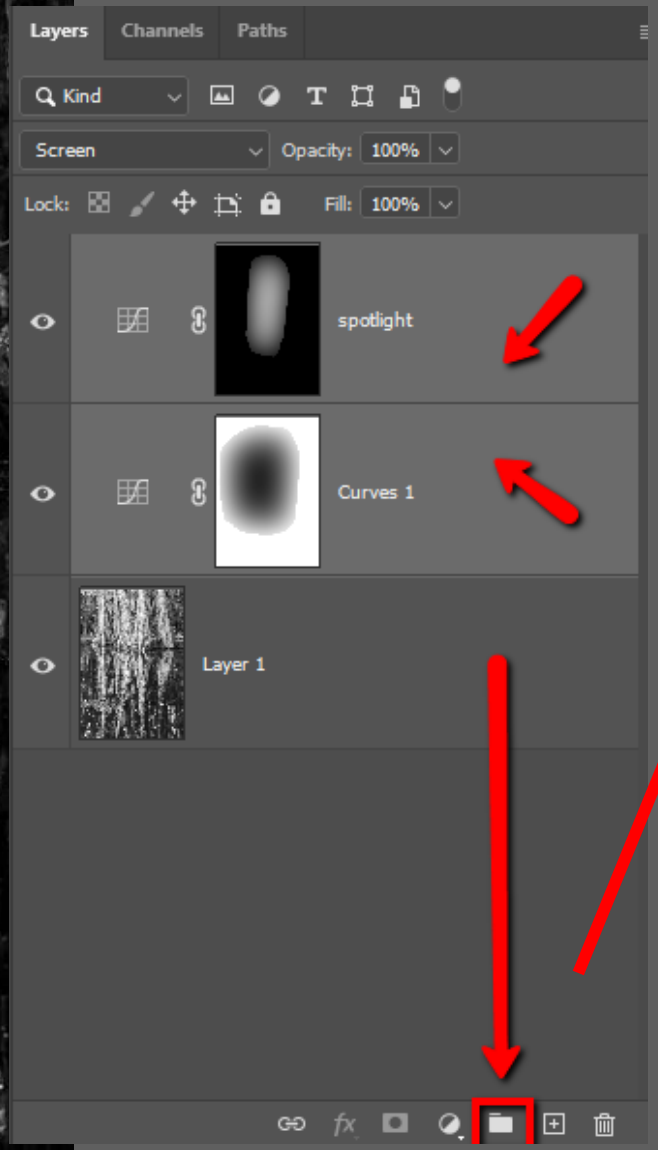
Create spotlight:

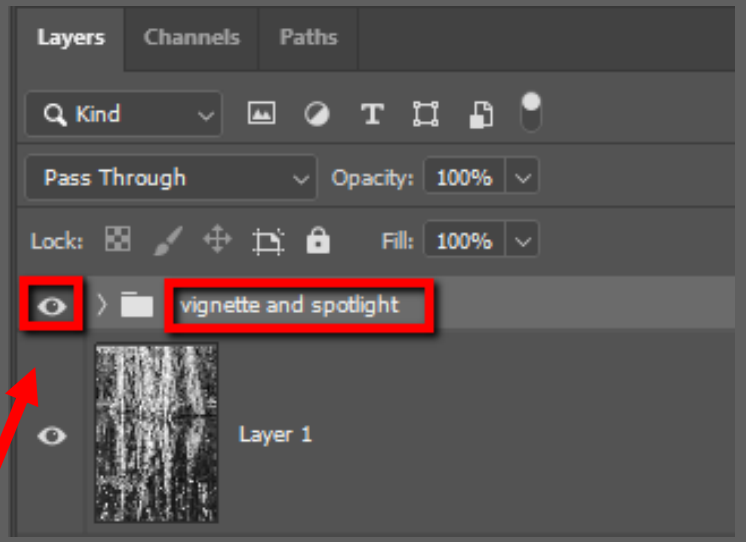
- Add Curves layer
- Set to Screen
- Inverse mask
- Lower opacity
- Use Lasso to select area


Gaussian Blur Alt+Ctrl+F
Convert for Smart Filters
Filter Gallery...
Adaptive Wide Angle... Alt+Shift+Ctrl+A
Camera Raw Filter
Lens Correction...
Liquify...
Vanishing Point...
3D
Artistic
Blur
Blur Gallery
Brush Strokes
Distort
Noise
Pixelate
Render
Sharpen
Sketch
Stylize
Texture
Video
Other
Auto FX Software
Average
Blur
Blur More
Box Blur...
Gaussian Blur...
Lens Blur...
Motion Blur...
Radial Blur...
Shape Blur...
Smart Blur...
Surface Blur...
Gaussian Blur
OK
Cancel
Preview
100%
Radius: 403.2 Pixels
Filter 3D View Window Help
Gaussian Blur Alt+Ctrl+F
Convert for Smart Filters
*Repeat blur 3-6 times until mask is soft
Select Filter 3D View Window
All Ctrl+A
Deselect Ctrl+D
Reselect Shift+Ctrl+D
Inverse Shift+Ctrl+I
Layers Channels Paths
Kind
Screen
Opacity: 30%
Lock:
Fill: 100%
Spotlight
Vignette
Layer 1



Use Blend If to reduce impact on already dark shadow areas; Hold Alt or Opt and click to split triangle





Clean up layers panel by grouping vignette and spotlight layers

- Added vignette
- Added “spotlight”
- Noise reduction
- Crop, size, and sharpen

Final Image

Initial RAW File

© J. Alan Whiteside

Final Session Topics

- Cropping
- Dodge and Burn

Final Session:

- Saturation Adjustment
- Blurring
- Foreground to Background Transition
- Transposition (flipping the image)
- Vignette and Spotlight

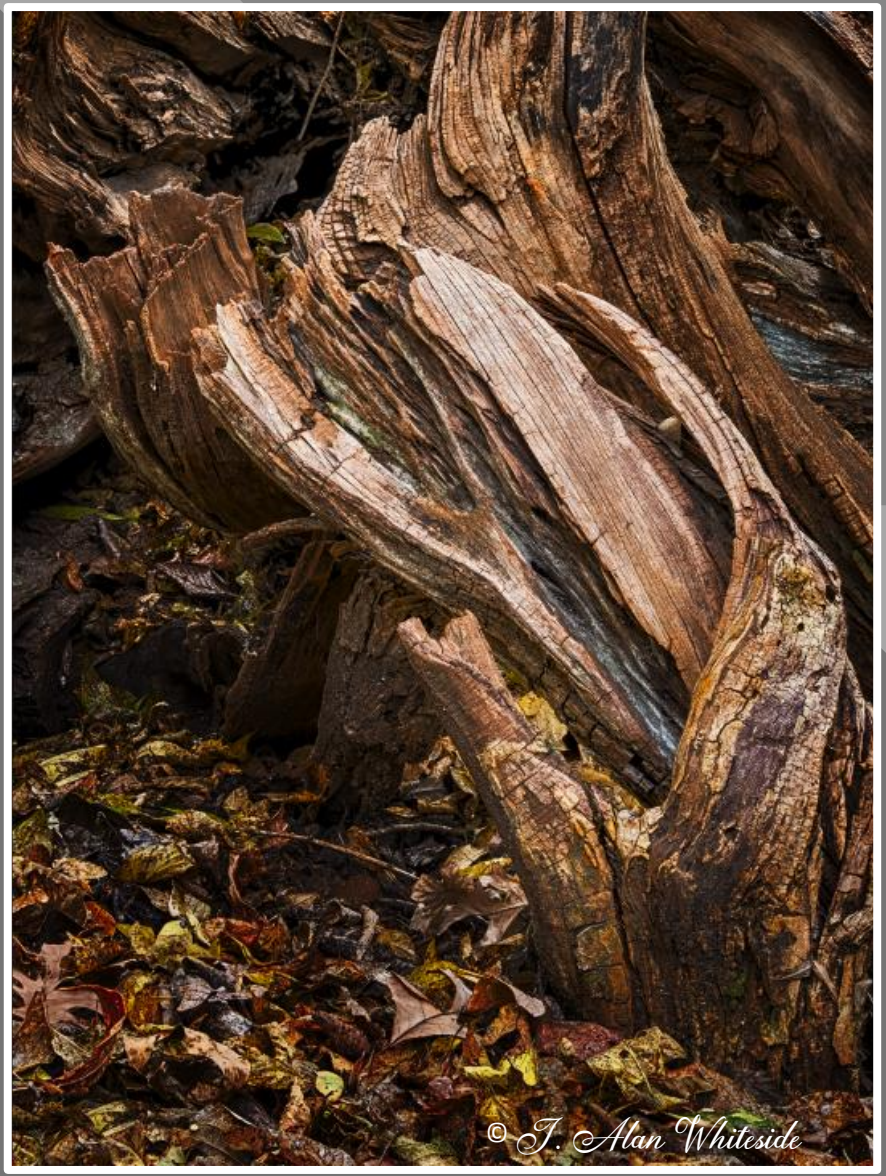
D&B Bonus Example

Initial RAW File

Final File

D&B Bonus Example

Initial RAW File



Final File